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### Committee Assignments

Land Use & Planning (Chair)  
Highways & Transportation  
Higher Education

### Senate Bills to Watch

**SB 5255** – limits the rule-making authority of state agencies (*passed the Senate and is now in the House State Government Committee*)

**SB 5256** – requires state agencies to file cost-benefit analysis statement early on in the rule-making process (*passed the Senate and is now in the House State Government Committee*)

**SB 5312** – requires quality management programs for state agencies (*currently in the Senate Government Operations & Elections Committee*)

# Sen. J oyce Mulliken's

## UPDATE FROM OLYMPIA

2/21/03

Dear Friends,

I want to tell you about two bills we passed this week in the Senate. Combined, these two proposals will have a significant impact on our state's economy and jobs climate, especially here in Eastern Washington. Both the agriculture industry – the largest industry in the state – and small businesses – the largest employer in the state – will benefit from these bills.

**Senate Bill 5161** – Commonly referred to as “the ergonomics bill,” this legislation will overturn the Department of Labor and Industries' mandated workplace safety rules regarding musculoskeletal injuries. Businesses will be able to *voluntarily* comply if they so choose.

These ergonomic rules will cost businesses hundreds of millions of dollars – costs that will result in higher prices, layoffs and businesses leaving this state for greener pastures. Our state simply cannot afford them. Employers in Washington are already facing a 29 percent increase in workers' compensation rates, the second highest minimum wage in the nation and an unemployment tax increase anywhere from 14 to 70 percent! It's a wonder anyone can stay in business!

**Senate Bill 5017** – This legislation exempts minors working for family businesses from industrial insurance provisions. We already have exemptions for minors working on family farms. This legislation just added ‘family businesses’ to the current exemption. Family businesses need to be encouraged. They are the stepping-stones for our future entrepreneurs and are an excellent learning experience for our children.

As always, please contact my office with your questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Sen. Joyce Mulliken, 13<sup>th</sup> Legislative District



Senator Joyce Mulliken and school group

### **A special thank you!**

Thanks to all the 13<sup>th</sup> District 4-H Club members for visiting me in Olympia as part of the “Know Your Government” program.

It was a pleasure to spend time with you!